Semester Project Write Up

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I attempted to find information about the key players of the Wagner Private Military Group using Bing News API. I was unable to find much, and my code only shows the first 10 results which is not coded to show only those results, but I am unsure of how to correct. For most of the code I used Yahoo search, YouTube, specific module documentation, and Stackoverflow to help get the code to work and especially to get the code to export to and Excel sheet.

The code itself is simple yet I struggled with it for a long time since it still isn’t giving me the results I would have liked, but no matter what I do to the code now, the results either do not generate at all or they are worse than what I finally was able to pull off. I have used documentation for the specific modules and have cleaned the data received to the best of my knowledge. In general, I’m not very creative by nature and I prefer visual learning. If I were to find more visual coding examples, it would help me be able to think around the issues that I faced.

One of the things that did not work well for this project is me teaching myself how to code. Through this class I have learned a lot about coding in Python, but I understand it in an academic way and not as much in a “I can use this code to do such and such” in my daily life. Although the idea behind coding is more fun now than it was before, I still have trouble thinking my way through debugging and fixing my own code since I do not work with this technology much.

Another thing that I think would have helped me a great deal was before choosing the assignment and method. Seeing how those specific APIs would work in real time. For example, I had difficulties when first using the Bing API since it was vastly different from the lecture videos on creating API keys for Google Maps. Since that was the only information, we had besides the Zippopotamus website, it was confusing to navigate on my own. Eventually I found a YouTube video to help but it took awhile and was frustrating to try to navigate creating API keys on Bing without seeing an example first.

I will say that even though this code is simple and not all encompassing like I wanted it to be, it’s still good code and gives me some results that can be used for data analysis. I am also proud of myself for being able to find the resources that I need to write and execute this code. I think if I had more time and more ability to practice this new skill, I would be able to find more information.

If I had to do a project like this in the future, I would look through more resources and documentation for the modules to be able to compare and see which ones would be most useful to me. Also, if time were not a limit, I would spend more time trying different ways to code to ensure the best practices are being implemented and getting the results I desire.

Overall, though, I think this is an interesting assignment and if I could do another like it, I think I would be better prepared for what I need to do and how to sort through it. I also would have started the assignment as soon as it came available and was discussed so that I would have more time to work through these difficulties. It also would have been neat to find something new to give them, but I already figured that I would not find anything that they didn’t already know.